

**THE NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST  
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13 April 1934**

**VERDICT FOR DEFENSE IN  
"BLACK MAGIC" CASE.**

**MR. CROWLEY LOSES**

**Counsel Describes Him As "Hypocritical Rascal"**

**"TIGER WOMAN" IN BOX**

**QUESTIONED ABOUT DRUGS,  
DRINK AND CAT SACRIFICE**

The authoress of a book called "Tiger Woman," who told the court that she was the "tiger woman," was cross-examined to-day in the King's Bench Division when the hearing of the "Black Magic" libel suit was resumed.

She was Mrs. Betty Sedgwick, whose former husband, Raoul Loveday, died at the Cefalu Villa, in Sicily, which was occupied by Mr. Aleister Crowley, the plaintiff in the action.

She was questioned to-day about her evidence yesterday, in which she told of the sacrifice of a cat in the villa.

Every word of it, she asserted to-day, was absolutely true.

She was also questioned, she asserted to-day in London, when she was an artist's model, and said that she had not used drugs for years.

The jury stopped the case after the final speech for the plaintiff, and returned a verdict for the defendants, who were Miss Nina Hamnett, author of the book "Laughing Torso," and the printers and publishers of the book. Judgment was entered for the defendants with costs.

Mr. Crowley alleged that the book imputed that he practiced black magic.

In his final speech for Miss Hamnett, Mr. Martin O'Connor described Mr. Crowley as a hypocritical rascal.

## **"Fast Life" Denial**

Mr. Crowley is suing Miss Nina Hamnett, authoress of a book entitled "Laughing Torso." He alleged that in her book Miss Hamnett imputed that he practiced black magic. He claimed damages against Miss Hamnett and Messrs, Constable and Co., Ltd., the publishers, and Messrs. Whittingham and Griggs, the printers.

The defence was a plea of justification. The case was before Mr. Justice Swift in the King's Bench Division.

Mrs. Betty Sedgwick, formerly the wife of Frederick Charles Loveday, who had been referred to in the case as Raoul Loveday, declared yesterday that she had witnessed a ceremony at the abbey at Cefalu in which a cat was sacrificed on the altar, and her husband made to drink a cup of the blood.

She was further cross-examined by Mr. Eddy (for the plaintiff), who, as his first question to-day, asked: "Immediately prior to your marriage to Raoul Loveday would your life be fairly described as drink, drugs and immorality?"

"No," replied Mrs. Sedgwick.

Mr. Eddy: Is there any part of that statement which is inaccurate?—It is inaccurate. It is not true.

Which part is untrue?—Drugs. I haven't drugged for years.

"I thought you told me yesterday you had been taking cocaine?—Of course. But you must remember that was when I was 18. I drugged from 18 until I was 25. I couldn't go on or I would have been dead.

Mr. Eddy: Drink?—Not more than anyone else—with my dinner.

Immorality?—No.

You were living a very fast life in London?—No.

When you married your husband was he in a poor state of health?—He had been ill six months before, but he was getting better. He had great nervous energy.

Did you try to involve him in the life you were living in London?—Well, I was a model. I had to keep both of us. I was "sitting" very hard, because we had no money. We were living in a little back room.

Mrs. Sedgwick agreed that after her arrival in England from Sicily, she supplied information to a Sunday newspaper.

"I am suggesting," remarked Mr. Eddy, "that you are the source of all these stories about 'the worst man in the world.'"

## "VERY CHARMING" CATS

Asked if there was a word of truth in her evidence about the "terrible sacrifice of a cat." She replied: "Absolutely true—everything about the cat is true."

Mr. Eddy: Are many of the cats in Sicily wild and destructive animals?—I only knew two, and they were very charming cats.

Mr. Eddy suggested that the shooting of a wild cat by Mr. Crowley was the basis for her story.

Mrs. Sedgwick: No, no.

She was turned out of the abbey a few days before her husband's death.

Mr. Eddy: What was he suffering from?

Mrs. Sedgwick: I have no idea. I thought it was laudanum poisoning.

Mr. Eddy pointed out that in her book Mrs. Sedgwick has said he was suffering from enteric.

"That is true," Mrs. Sedgwick explained. "After he drank the cat's blood, he was violently ill and sick, and Mr. Crowley gave him laudanum—a lot of it—as medicine. I told Scotland Yard I thought it was laudanum poisoning at the time."

Raoul was her third husband.

Mr. Eddy: When did you marry your fourth?—I have forgotten. About seven or eight years ago.

That fourth husband had a very serious illness, didn't he?—The fourth. I don't think so.

Mr. Eddy quoted from "Tiger Woman"—Mrs. Sedgwick's book—the fourth husband's mother as saying. "You foul wicked woman. You are killing my son."

Mr. Eddy: Are you "Tiger Woman?"—Yes.

Why?—Because I am rather feline in looks. I thought perhaps it was rather a good name for me.

Mrs. Sedgwick said she slapped her fourth husband's mother because she annoyed her.

Mr. Eddy quoted from the book a passage describing how she aroused the resentment of a man's female companion by sitting at the same table.

"She became insulting," the passage continued. "My nostrils dilated as they do when I am angry. At last she got up and danced with the man. As they passed by she looked backwards at me and said: 'She is a pretty little thing, but it is a pity she has false teeth,'"

"I jumped up and slapped her as hard as I could on the face. Waiters immediately bundled us upstairs into the street, fighting all the time.

"I meant paying dearly for that insult. False teeth, indeed.

"I plunged my fingers into her hair and pulled hard. The result was not what I had expected. I found myself lying in the gutter and clutched in my right hand—I could hardly believe my eyes—was a chestnut wig."

"You have got a very violent nature?" asked Mr. Eddy.

Mrs. Sedgwick: No.

Mrs. Sedgwick agreed that she was known as "Bummetoff," and had received letters signed "Poddleiff" from an old friend of hers.

### **Letters Said To Have Been Stolen**

After questions about other letters Mr. Eddy asked: "Did you ever authorize anyone to extract those letters from your case and give them to Mr. Crowley?"

Witness: No.

Mr. Justice Swift: Are these produced by Mr. Crowley?—Yes.

Do you know Mr. Crowley got possession of your letters?—I can't imagine how he got them.

Mrs. Sedgwick declared that all the contents of her case were stolen.

Mr. Justice Swift: Where were they stolen from?—From my cottage or from the hotel when I was in London. I always took the case about with me everywhere.

Mr. Hilbery called on Mr. Eddy to produce a letter of February 24th, 1933, from the defendant's solicitors to Mrs. Sedgwick.

Mr. Justice Swift: He clearly has no right to have it. Whoever has possession of those letters is in possession, according to this lady's evidence, of stolen property. They have no right to have it. Merely asking somebody whom you suspect of being in possession of stolen property to produce it, doesn't give you the right to give secondary evidence of the document if that person doesn't produce it.

Mr. Hilbery: The witness says she has been permanently deprived of the possession of the letters against her will.

Mr. Justice Swift: I don't see why we should not use the good old English word "stolen" if the facts warrant it. We shall never know in this case how, because we shall have no

opportunity of finding out, but it would be very interesting to know how Mr. Crowley came to be in possession of these letters.

When some of the copies of the missing letters were produced and referred to, Mr. Justice Swift agreed with Mr. Hilbery that they should remain in the custody of the court. He instructed the associate of the court to keep them until the case was over.

"Then remind me to discuss them again, please," he added.

Mr. Hilbery said this was all his evidence. He wished, however, to refute any suggestion that the solicitors instructing him had been a party to purchasing any evidence.

Mr. Eddy: My suggestion was, is, and will be, that money explains the presence of Miss Betty May (Mrs. Sedgwick) in the witness-box. I do not make any sort of imputation upon the solicitors.

Mr. Justice Swift: Does not money play a very important part in producing in the witness-box most witnesses who have no interest whatever in the case?—They all expect to get their expenses.

Mr. Eddy: I am not prepared for a single moment to assume that the money paid this woman really represented expenses. My position is that she was in fact demanding money, and getting it.

It was indicated that the solicitor would be called later.

Mr. Martin O'Connor, for Miss Hamnett referring to Mr. Crowley's refusal to accept his challenge to try his magic in court, said it was appalling that "in this enlightened age a court should be investigating magic which is arch-humbug practiced by arch-roguers to rob weak-minded people."

"I hope this action," he added, "will end for all time the activities of this hypocritical rascal."